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THE WORK OF ACADEMICIAN A. V. TOPCHIEV

Aleksandr Vasil'yevich Topchiyev is a specialist in the field of organic chemistry, particularly petroleum chemistry.

A student of Academician P. P. Shorygin, Topchiyev follows the better traditions of Russian organic chemists. He studies intensively the more important reactions of transforming hydrocarbons, developing new, original methods of organic synthesis, while closely connecting theory with practice. He is credited with more than 50 scientific works and a series of inventions.

Topchiyev developed his own scientific school at the Moscow Petroleum Institute named A. M. Gukin, while heading the Chair of Organic Chemistry and Petroleum Chemistry.

His principal scientific works were devoted to a thorough study of the processes of nitrating hydrocarbons and heterocyclic compounds with the aid of nitrogen and nitric oxide salts. He discovered highly effective catalysts and developed a new division of contact reactions in nitrating hydrocarbons. The range of these works is of great scientific and national economic importance.

The second important phase of his work was devoted to the study of the reactions of polymerization, alkylation, and isomerization of various hydrocarbons in the presence of compounds of boron fluoride with phosphoric acid and other catalysts. These studies were important to the petroleum industry.

The third phase of Topchiyev's scientific studies consisted in developing new methods of synthesizing organic silicon compounds and the investigation of the physical-chemical properties of important representatives of this class of compounds. In these works he obtained vast practical and theoretical material and discovered new regions of technical application for organic silicon compounds.

Topchiyev's scientific activity is characterized by the great national economic and theoretical importance of his studies and the close connection of his work with contemporary technology.

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He has given instruction covering the whole range of his experience in the higher schools: from 1932 to 1938, lecturer at the Chemical Institute imeni D. I. Mendeleev; from 1938, professor, director of Organic Chemistry, first at the Technological Institute of the Academy of Sciences, from 1940, at the Petroleum Institute imeni I. M. Gubkin; from 1941, he also served as director of the latter institute. In 1944 he defended his dissertation "Several New Methods of Nitrating Hydrocarbons," for the degree of Doctor of Chemical Sciences.

In 1947, Topchiyev was named Vice Minister of Higher Education and Vice Chairman of the Higher Certifying Commission. Since 1949 he has been the head scientific secretary of the Presidium, Academy of Sciences USSR.

Topchiyev's candidacy for active membership in the Academy of Sciences USSR was introduced by the Scientific Council of the Institute of Organic Chemistry and Petroleum Institute, Academy of Sciences USSR, Moscow Petroleum Institute imeni I. M. Gubkina, Moscow Chemical-Technological Institute imeni D. I. Mendeleev, and by Academicians N. D. Zelinski, S. S. Hametkin, A. N. Nesmeyanov, V. M. Rod'kov, S. I. Vol'fkovich, and B. A. Kazanskiy.

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